

Research Article

Performing Cultural Art, Preventing Femicide: Gender Interpretation of Reog Cemandi Dance Sidoarjo

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ABSTRACT

There are thousands of types of culture in the form of traditional arts that are diverse and still survive in the community. One example is the art of Reog Cemandi in Sidoarjo Regency. Its development, which until now has been able to be useful with a number of gender contents, makes it interesting to study. Various types of tools in the form of clothing, movements, poems, and offerings have gender meanings that are implemented in the lives of the surrounding community. This research aims to reveal the form and meaning of Reog Cemandi with gender concepts. At the same time, it examines the potential efforts to prevent femicide reflected in Reog Cemandi through socialist feminism. The data collection used interview, observation and documentation techniques. The data analysis was carried out through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusions. To strengthen the research relationship, femicide prevention indicators were used as data analysis instruments. The results of this research show that Reog Cemandi gives an implicit message in the clothes, movements, poems, and offerings in it. The message has a strong gender meaning including gender insight, gender equality, and women's empowerment. The message has been implemented in the social life of the Cemandi community. This article provides an understanding of the gender meaning in Reog Cemandi which is implemented in community behavior so that it has the potential as an effort to prevent femicide.

Keywords: femicide; gender; Reog Cemandi; Sidoarjo

ABSTRAK

Terdapat ribuan jenis kebudayaan berwujud kesenian tradisional yang beragam dan masih bertahan di tengah masyarakat. Salah satu contohnya adalah kesenian Reog Cemandi Kabupaten Sidoarjo. Perkembangannya yang hingga kini mampu bermanfaat dengan sejumlah muatan gender membuatnya menarik untuk diteliti. Berbagai jenis piranti berupa busana, gerak, syair, dan sesaji didalamnya memiliki makna gender yang terimplementasikan dalam kehidupan masyarakat sekitar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bentuk dan makna Tari Cemandi yang berkonsep gender. Sekaligus menelaah potensi usaha pencegahan femisida yang tercermin dalam Reog Cemandi melalui feminis sosialis. Pengumpulan data penelitian menggunakan teknik wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Adapun analisis data dilakukan melalui beberapa tahapan, yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data dan kesimpulan. Untuk memperkuat relasi penelitian, digunakan indikator pencegahan femisida sebagai instrumen analisis data. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Reog Cemandi memberi pesan tersirat dalam topeng, busana, gerak, syair, dan sesaji di dalamnya. Pesan tersebut memiliki makna gender yang cukup kuat meliputi wawasan gender, kesetaraan gender, dan pemberdayaan perempuan. Pesan tersebut telah diimplementasikan dalam kehidupan sosial masyarakat Cemandi dengan perilaku-perilaku yang mendukung kesetaraan gender. Artikel ini memberi pemahaman mengenai makna gender dalam Tari Reog Cemandi yang terimplementasikan dalam perilaku masyarakat sehingga berpotensi sebagai upaya pencegahan femisida.

Kata kunci: femisida; gender; Reog Cemandi; Sidoarjo

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, cases of violence against women are increasingly widespread and are not a new thing in crime. *Komnas Perempuan* in the news channel [Dewi \(2024\)](#) stated that femicide or murder of women occupied the highest position in female homicide cases during 2023. This femicide is carried out by spouses and ex-spouses. The problem of femicide in Indonesia has not received sufficient and qualified attention, so there are still many crimes or violence that are considered commonplace that still target women as victims ([komnasperempuan, 2020](#)). In fact, the articles applied have been guided by the Criminal Code regarding cases of premeditated murder and not ([Zulaichah, 2022](#)). Femicide cases are increasingly difficult to monitor because most of the victims have died. In Indonesia, The handling of cases of violence against women continued throughout 2019, and 145 cases of violence against women were covered by the mass media ([Saimima et al., 2022](#)).

The causes of femicide crimes contained in UN documents vary, including killings committed by intimate partners, honor killings, killings in the context of armed conflict, killings related to marriage dowries, and killings due to gender identity and sexual orientation ([UN Women Meksiko, 2023](#)). Meanwhile, the factors that cause femicide crimes in Indonesia occur due to several factors, namely, anger, irritation of masculinity, pressure to be responsible for pregnancy, rejected feelings, forced sexual services, and pressure to be materially responsible ([komnasperempuan, 2020](#)). Although there are official regulations regarding murder, it has not yet had a deterrent effect on perpetrators, so this crime is still rampant. In addition, there is no concise and easy-to-understand explanation for the general public about the concept of gender and why it is important for understanding social injustice ([Indrawasih & Pradipta, 2021](#)).

It can be concluded that mere sanctions are not optimal in reducing the quantity of femicide. Therefore, *Komnas Perempuan (2021)* published three indicators of femicide prevention that can be done as a first step to make people aware of the position of women in the social sphere. These indicators include awareness or insight into gender equality, cooperation between genders in society, and women's empowerment. Insight into gender equality intersects with women because gender

equality is a movement that is voiced with the aim of fighting for women ([Latifa, 2006](#)). The concept emerges as a reaction to discrimination and injustice that create gender-biased benchmarks in society.

The existence of women in the social order should not eliminate the role of women in the community system. Women have the right to play a role with an equal portion with men. Both can play a role according to their interests and talents together without clashing. If the position of the two genders does not experience inequality, it can be a form of success for women's emancipation and stop the patriarchal system that has been going on in society. Awareness of women's empowerment can progressively change social and cultural systems without eliminating the dignity of men ([Taufik, 2022](#)). Various approaches to gender equality and women's empowerment have begun to be carried out, one of which is through social media and educational institutions. Another effort that can be made to realize the value of gender equality in an attractive and persuasive way is through the arts. Gender relations will arise because the relationship between cultural diversity and performing arts is very close, because performing arts are often a mirror of cultural diversity in society ([Aditya & Ramadhan, 2024](#)). Each region in Indonesia has its own distinctive arts, reflecting its cultural diversity ([Putri, 2024](#)).

Sidoarjo's massive industry does not prevent its people from living alongside the arts. Sidoarjo Regency is one of the regions in East Java Province that has various cultures and arts. Not only famous as an area with iconic shrimp and milkfish, Sidoarjo also has a local art that has a character similar to the Reog art from Ponorogo. *Reog* is one of the tradition-based arts that has a strong presence in Indonesian society. Various types of reog have emerged and developed in a number of regions, one example is Reog Cemandi in Sidoarjo Regency. *Reog Cemandi*, a hidden gem from Cemandi village, Sedati sub-district, Sidoarjo district, East Java, is one of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritages that is rich in history and meaning. The main meaning carried in this art performance is about gender equality, namely how the relationship between women and men is harmonious. Although its name may not be as big as Reog Ponorogo, its charm and uniqueness are no less interesting to discuss.

One of the characteristics that distinguishes *Reog Cemandi* from *Reog Ponorogo* is the equipment used. *Reog Cemandi* is simpler, with drums, swords, and *angkung* as its accompanying musical instruments. The *banongan* mask used also has a different shape and meaning. If *Reog Ponorogo* is identical to the dashing *Singo Barong* figure, *Reog Cemandi* has its own characteristics. According to Soedarsono, (1977) the form of *Reog Cemandi* presentation that can attract audiences is movement, music, dramatization, choreography, theme, makeup, clothing, dance properties, lighting, staging and program arrangement.

Reog Cemandi dates back to 1922 and tells the story of two teenagers from an Islamic boarding school in Cemandi village. The two teenagers were then ordered by the *Kyai* of their *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) to fight against the Dutch (Afanti, 2021). This resistance is then represented in a dance called *Reog Cemandi*. Aside from being a means of continuing the traditions of the ancestors, *Reog Cemandi* also has another function in shaping the behavior patterns of the Cemandi community. The values contained in the tradition will guide the community in their behavior (Susanto, 2020). The values that become community guidelines in the behavior of the Cemandi community have the concept of gender equality which is in accordance with the indicators of preventing femicide. To conduct the analysis, the theories used are socialist feminism and the femicide approach.

Socialist feminists view that women's circumstances are determined by their sexuality, reproduction, production structures, and ways of socializing. Therefore, if a woman does not want oppression, her behavior must be strong and confident (Fakih, 2013). To strengthen her position in social roles, socialist feminists indicate that women should participate in the public sector. This makes it possible to change the way gender is perceived in society. That is, gender is seen as a socially developed behavior, dictating how individuals should behave within (Edam, 2024).

a particular society. In addition, the elimination of role standardization in the household must also be done so that men and women can share roles flexibly (Rokhmansyah, 2016). Therefore, this approach requires a description of the socio-cultural conditions in a particular society to find the gender relations that exist. The socialist feminist analysis method is suitable for this research because the researcher tries to reveal the socio-cultural conditions contained in the *Reog Cemandi* art in influencing the potential prevention of femicide. This research is centered on the concept of gender and

femicide, so the analysis will focus on forms that contain the meaning of gender relations which include movements, musical accompaniment (poem), mask, clothing, and offerings.

There is research that has been conducted with the concept of gender relations analysis. The previous research that has been done is a population journal article by Latifa (2006) with the title "Gender Equality in Inti Jagat Badui Custom". This research analyzes the position of Bedouin women who have equal positions and roles with men. In some aspects, women are considered to have a number of advantages over men. This phenomenon has been going on for a very long time before the concept of gender equality between men and women became a discourse and was even planned to be a pillar of the concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In connection with this, the author tries to understand further the cultural concept behind the principle of equality between men and women in Bedouin society and tries to explore the functions and roles of men and women in relation to gender equality. Another research with gender relation analysis is article by Surbakti et al (2024) with the title "Socio-cultural Representation and Gender Gap in Lengger Dance, Bedhaya Dance and Reog Dance". This research aims to investigate the influence of gender concepts in dance, particularly in Javanese culture, with a focus on contemporary dance practices. Through a qualitative approach and content analysis, this study reveals strong gender stereotypes and objectification of the body in dance, as well as the idealization of women's roles in Javanese cultural guidelines. The findings highlight challenges to gender norms in traditional Javanese dance.

In addition, Research with femicide analysis is existed by Refikal (2024) with the title "Influences of Patriarchal Culture and Femicide as a Form of Gender-based Violence against Women from Human Rights Perspective". This research examines the patriarchal culture that normalizes violence against women as the root of the problem. Unfortunately, patriarchal culture gives birth to extreme acts such as femicide, where women are killed out of hatred or revenge. Therefore, this research also examines how the phenomenon of feminism emerged as a reaction to this injustice. This research uses a human rights perspective which results in that in feminized cases, the deceased victim can no longer demand justice for herself, but the state is obliged to uphold justice by investigating her case, providing compensation to her family and necessary remedies.

Further research by [Fakhiroh et al., \(2020\)](#) "Ethnopedagogy of Reog Cemandi Art for Strengthening National Character Education for Grade V Elementary School Students". The purpose of the research is to examine the symbolic values and meanings contained in the Reog Cemandi art. The value and meaning are then transformed in the form of quantitative handout development in learning. Another research about *Reog Cemandi* are examined in the [Apriliza & Sinduwiatmo \(2024\)](#) article with the title "Transformation of the Meaning of Reog Cemandian Dance in the People of Cemandi Village". The research examines Changes in the art of *Reog Cemandi* Dance are influenced by globalization factors. In these changes, the results of research that lead to changes in the *Reog Cemandi* not only occur as a form of ritual, but also changes in the art of *Reog Cemandi* Dance. Occurs as a form of ritual only, this art is still presented as a means of entertainment without eliminating the original community identity of the culture itself and also without leaving the existing rituals.

This research is different from previous research because there is no research that analyzes Reog Cemandi Sidoarjo with socialist feminist theory and indicators of preventing femicide in people's lives. Based on the background that has been described, the problem formulation that the researcher wants to analyze is the potential for preventing femicide through *Reog Cemandi* Sidoarjo dance. Therefore, this research can provide efforts to prevent femicide through the art of Reog Cemandi by expressing the meanings of harmonious relations between genders contained in it.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research model, this type of research prioritizes data collection in the form of narrative or exposure. According to [Ali \(2019\)](#) qualitative research is an approach in conducting research that is guided by natural phenomena or symptoms. Departing from this definition, the target of qualitative research is the things that can be observed are attitudes, symptoms, or phenomena that occur. Explaining the meaning of data or events found by researchers by showing the evidence. The purpose of qualitative descriptive research is to find information related to the object of research in detail. This research will focus on the *Reog Cemandi* tradition of the Cemandi community. Researchers tried to analyze the potential for preventing femicide through Reog Cemandi Dance from a gender perspective.

The data collection techniques in this research are semi-structured interviews and observation. The sources of this research are male dancers, female dancers, the

next generation (5th) of *Reog Cemandi* dance, and the surrounding community. Researchers sought information from *Reog Cemandi* dancers about their experiences in dancing *Reog Cemandi*, gender roles in the dance, challenges faced, and their contribution to preserving this dance. In addition, researchers also sought information from the next generation of *Reog Cemandi* about the meaning, stages of tradition, and representation of gender in *Reog Cemandi*. In addition, we observed the *Cemandi* community's response to the art and their role in preserving it. Researchers also observed activities related to the division of roles between genders. This research was conducted in Cemandi Village, Sedati District, Sidoarjo Regency.

Observation is the activity of understanding an object through observation with the help of the five senses. According to [Fauzy \(2022\)](#) observation is understood as a complex series, a process that includes biological and psychological processes. The biological process in question is related to observation, while the psychological process is related to memory. In this research, the things that are observed are related to the social and cultural conditions of society with the concept of gender equality which is reflected in Reog Cemandi Dance. In addition, observations were made to determine the achievement of femicide prevention indicators through Reog Cemandi dance. Data analysis was carried out by compiling interview and observation data, selecting interview and observation data, classifying interview and observation data based on femicide prevention indicators, then presenting the results of the analysis with a gender perspective and femicide approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The creation of dance is motivated by several factors, namely the transformative experience of the dancer, the delivery of political and spiritual messages, the expression of cultural identity, and the preservation of sacred and esoteric traditions, political and spiritual messages, expression of cultural identity, and preservation of sacred and esoteric traditions ([Febriyandi & Swastiwi, 2024](#)).

Reog Cemandi also has a historical background and has developed into a tradition that has many gender meanings. The tools in *Reog Cemandi* dance, especially masks, movements, clothing, poems, and offerings have various gender meanings. These gender meanings are then correlated with indicators of femicide prevention which include gender insight, gender cooperation, and women's empowerment. Researchers found a number of meanings that have the potential to voice gender equality

as the first step in preventing femicide. These meanings coexist and intertwine with the Cemandi community.

Gender Cooperation in Reog Cemandi Dance and the Potential for Femicide Prevention

The formation of *Reog Cemandi* is motivated by the history of art creation, namely as a form of resistance of the people of Cemandi village against the Dutch colonizers who attacked the village (Dwiyani, 2017). During the Dutch colonial era, a resident of Cemandi Village by the name of *Dul Katimin* became a student at the *Sidoresmo pesantren (islamic boarding school)* in Surabaya. His village became one of the targets of attacks by the colonizers. As a result of the incident, *Dul Katimin* felt pity and concern because this attack was very cruel and detrimental. The villagers were subjected to torture and tax levies by the colonizers. As a result of this situation, *Dul Katimin* told his sadness to the islamic teacher (continued *Kyai*) at his hut. Finally, the *Kyai* asked *Dul Katimin* to find six 50 cm jackfruit logs, animal skins, pieces of bamboo, rattan and *randu* wood. These materials later became the background for the formation of *Reog Cemandi* because they became the basis for making a mask called *banongan*.

“The mask is considered to have mystical powers because according to local beliefs it has been filled by the figures of *genderuwo lanang* and *genderuwo wadon*.” (Interview with head of *Reog Cemandi*, April 13 2024).

Aesthetically, masks are a form of expression produced by humans through symbols for certain purposes (Sedyawati, 2010). Every art that uses masks has a distinctive name, **Picture 1** show the mask in *Reog Cemandi* is given *genderuwo* or also often called *banongan*. This male and female gendered mask is played by two people of male and female gender as well.

This pair of masks has a symbol as a *jodohan* which means the cooperation of a pair of men and women. The mask's expression and color depict human nature (Wijaya et al., 2022).

The *jodohan* mask in *Reog Cemandi* has a deep and symbolic meaning. It often symbolizes the search for an ideal life partner, depicting hope, love and loyalty. In the context of the performance, the *jodohan* mask is presented to show the meeting between two people who are destined to be together, even though they may have



Picture 1. Reog Cemandi Mask

to face various obstacles. *Banongan lanang* has a red base color with a grinning face and fangs. The red color according to Javanese culture is a representation of a brave attitude (Syarif, 2018). In accordance with the meaning based on facial expressions and Javanese cultural context, the meaning of the red color in the *banongan lanang* mask is anger when seeing evil and courage to fight evil. Its counterpart, the *banongan wadon*, has a white base color that means calmness or tranquility. The color white according to Javanese culture has a close relationship with soft characters such as space (Pujiyanto, 2011). This *jodohan* (soulmate) mask has coloring that works together to create a balanced atmosphere, namely red and white. The meaning of color in the mask creates a symbolization of the balance of the division of roles between genders, so that dance actors have the awareness to work together in a balanced creative process. In the performance, interactions between dancers wearing the *jodohan* mask and other characters can emphasize conflicts and resolutions that are often faced in relationships, such as differences of opinion or challenges from the surrounding environment. Thus, *jodohan* mask serves not only as a symbol of love, but also as a reminder of the importance of communication, understanding, and mutual respect between men and women to create a harmonious life.

The existence of *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* shows the equality of gender roles in *Reog Cemandi* dance. Men and women have a role to complement each other and create harmony in the implementation of rituals so that the meaning and benefits can be felt by the community (Patmisari, 2017). Both men (*banongan lanang*) and women (*banongan wadon*) have an important role in the ritual, namely as a unifying force in repelling danger. At that time, *Reog Cemandi* functioned as a ritual tool to ward off dangers that lurked in Cemandi Village (Gustiani, 2016). The *Reog Cemandi* dance performers

always try to maintain the originality of this art so that the masks used have the same meaning. A form of gender equality is realized in the mask because people believe that resistance to evil must be done together.

“*Banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* are iconic because the fight against evil must be done together (men and women) because all have a role to play. The meaning is still the same from the past.” (Interview with dance practitioners April 13 2024).

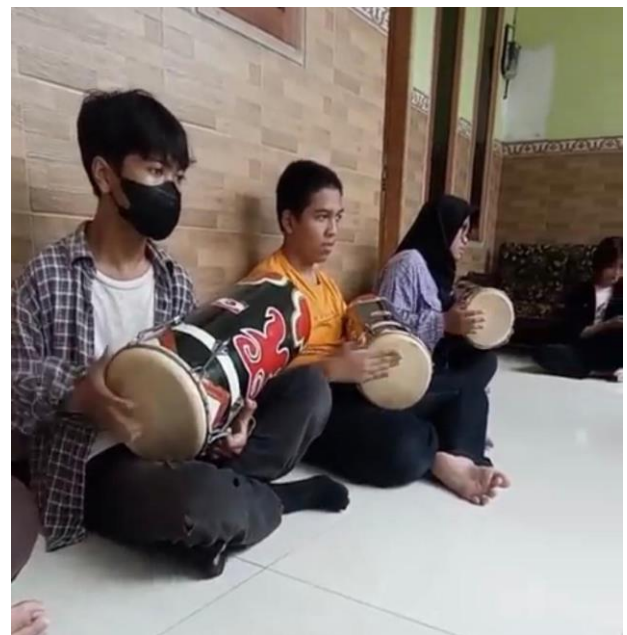
The mask is made to resemble a *buto* or giant with fangs and a grinning expression. People believe that the mask has been filled with supernatural creatures such as *genderuwo* with male and female gender. Therefore, the masks are named *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* which means male *genderuwo* and female *genderuwo*. Once completed, the *Kyai* ordered two people to wear the masks when the invaders came to the village. After that, the two people wearing the masks beat the drums and march around the village. Due to the shape of the mask resembling a *buto* or giant, the concept of *Reog Cemandi* visually adapts *Reog Ponorogo*. Therefore, this art uses the name *Reog* in it. In 1922, the *Reog Cemandi* Sidoarjo dance formalized the name obtained from taking the name of the *Reog Ponorogo* dance because of the similarity in form and function, which is in the form of a *buto* or giant and functions to fight invaders (Bekti, 2022).



Picture 2. *Reog Cemandi* and *Cemandi* community

Picture 2 shows the enthusiasm of the community for the existence of *reog cemandi*. The *Cemandi* community believes that good cooperation between men and women can fight evil and solve problem. This is in accordance with the concept of socialist feminist theory that women must have confidence when doing something (Fakih, 2013), so that support and trust between genders can facilitate cooperative gender life. In line with this, Maliki (2006) states that gender is indeed classified as a pattern that occurs due to the

relations and interactions of men and women based on their respective social characteristics. Good gender relations can create a good social atmosphere as well. The existence of cooperation between genders can eliminate the subordination of women or patriarchal culture that can trigger femicide (Ramona et al., 2023). This behavior, which is based on cooperation between genders, is processed and realized in the regeneration process of dance actors.



Picture 3: Regeneration of *Reog Cemandi*

Picture 3 show the regeneration process, that was first carried out by the original *Reog Cemandi* dancers by teaching people who were interested in learning this art. Leaders and citizens have an interest in promoting arts and culture as a result of the strengthening of village autonomy and regional decentralization (Hudayana, 2021). Initially, male residents were more interested in this art. But gradually, both men and women, adults and children are interested in learning this dance. Regeneration of *Reog Cemandi* is an important step to ensure the sustainability of this traditional art form. Over time, the younger generation is less likely to recognize and understand the values contained in *Reog Cemandi*. Therefore, regeneration efforts are crucial in preserving this culture. Providing space for women in dance expression can realize the balance of gender cooperation (Putraningsih, 2006). *Reog Cemandi* receives special attention from the community and this fact is proof that the *Cemandi* community has realized the urgency of good gender relations in social life. The meaning of the *Reog Cemandi* dance mask indicates that the *Cemandi* community believes that good cooperation between men and women can fight evil and solve problems.

This meaning is realized in the openness of the community in learning dance together without causing subordination.

Gender Equality Insights in Reog Cemandi Dance and the Potential for Femicide

Awareness of the existence of gender equality in society is one indication of efforts to prevent femicide. Gender equality in a society is influenced by the surrounding culture (Jalil & Aminah, 2018). Culture can influence gender equality by reinforcing gender views and judgments between men and women. According to the Cemandi community, one of the elements that shape gender equality awareness is contained in the offerings of *Reog Cemandi*.



Picture 4. Reog Cemandi offerings

Offerings are symbolic of hopes or prayers represented in expressions or chants to be prayed to the Creator (Susanti & Lestari, 2021). Offerings in [picture 4](#) are also a symbolization that is often used as a medium for spiritual negotiations with things that are considered supernatural or invisible. In relation to humans, offerings have a function as a reflection of the interaction of life in society (Adam et al., 2019). Therefore, various cultures and arts use offerings for specific social and spiritual purposes. In *Reog Cemandi* art, offerings are prepared at night precisely before the performance is performed.

Before *Reog Cemandi* performs, offerings are always provided by the leader of *Reog Cemandi*, namely *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon*. The offerings in *Reog*

Cemandi have a form, arrangement, and meaning that has remained since long ago, namely *raja setangkep* bananas, old coconut, *setaman* flowers, *cok bakal*, and incense. The meaning of the offerings that are still related to the relationship between men and women are *raja setangkep* bananas, native chicken eggs, and coconut. (Interview with dance practitioner, 14 April 2024)

Reog Cemandi offerings that have gender-related meanings are *raja setangkep* bananas, native chicken eggs, and old coconut. *Pisang raja setangkep* is one of the offerings (bananas) in the form of plantains with a quantity of *setangkep* or one comb. *Raja setangkep* bananas is often used in Javanese traditional wedding rituals because it contains the meaning of gender relations (Astuti et al., 2015). This offering means that men and women must unite their determination together to achieve prosperity, so that life runs in balance. In addition, the choice of plantain means that one gender, whether male or female, should not feel superior to the other. Therefore, plantain *setangkep* is presented to show the concept of equality between men and women.

The next offering that contains gender meaning is free-range chicken eggs. Eggs are often used as offerings in marriage and pregnancy rituals (Sembiring, 2018). This is motivated by the meaning of eggs as the origin or forerunner of life. Similar to the meaning of eggs in wedding rituals, eggs in *Reog Cemandi* have a gender meaning through the combination of colors, namely white and yellow (Afanti, 2021). According to Javanese culture, the white color of the egg means the purity of a woman before having offspring protected by the shell. This meaning is in accordance with the meaning believed in *Reog Cemandi*. The yellow color according to Javanese culture has the meaning of fertility and prosperity (Syarif, 2018). In *Reog Cemandi*, the combination of white and yolk means the origin of life from men and women. It is this meaning that adds insight or the concept of gender in *Reog Cemandi* offerings.

Offerings other than plantains and free-range eggs do not have explicit gender meanings, but they are related to the previous two offerings. Other offerings include old coconut, *setaman* flowers, and *cok bakal*. Coconuts in offerings symbolize hope for a prosperous and useful life (Ristiani et al., 2024). In *Reog Cemandi*, coconut is interpreted as a hope that all humans, both men and women, can benefit each other. The hope symbolized by the coconut is then continued by the

symbolization of *setaman* flowers. The meaning of the word *setaman* flower is various types of flowers in the garden (Faradila & Suryadi, 2023). This *setaman* flower means that the prayers or hopes symbolized in other offerings can be granted. Various types of offerings that have gender meanings and hopes are gathered in *cok bakal*. The meaning of the existence of *cok bakal* is "cikal bakaling urip dumadining jagat sakalir, eling o marang Purwa Duksina Jantraning Gesang" which means the origin of life of the entire universe and reminds us of the beginning and end of life's journey (Margiyono et al., 2023).

The intertwined meanings of these offerings provide knowledge that the presence of everything must be paired, just like humans. There are male and female figures, although physically both genders have differences. However, this difference then becomes a factor that causes the division of roles. An example is the division of contributions between men and women in making offerings. This division does not have to be the same, but it must be harmonious. A good division of roles can realize a harmonious and effective ritual procession (Suhaeny, 2020). Awareness and insight into gender equality contained in offerings and implemented through the practice of making offerings can be a potential prevention of femicide through culture. The spread of norms or knowledge related to gender equality has been proven to reduce the number of violence and killings of women (Saddiq, 2023). In addition to the offerings, gender insights in Reog Cemandi are also contained in the movements performed after the placement of the offerings.

"*Banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* place offerings together because in realizing hopes, it must be done together between men and women." (Interview with head of Reog Cemandi, April 13, 2024).

After placing the offerings, *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* return to the line and walk together in a parallel position, hand in hand. This position means that the achievement of goals in doing or expecting something can be realized if men and women walk hand in hand. While walking hand in hand, *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* sing Reog Cemandi verses.

(Poem/Sung Verses)

Iki reog, reog cemandi.

Reog e wong Sidoarjo.

Ayo konco podho nyawiji.

Bebarengan bangun negoro.

Tansah ibadah Ing tengah ratri.

Suci diri Jiwo mewarogo .

Sumingkiro barang olo sing nggudho.

Riko iling gusti Niro, sing sayup sing rukun.

Meaning:

This is reog, reog cemandi.

Reog from Sidoarjo.

Let's be determined friends.

Build the country together.

The course of human life remembers God.

Always worship at all times.

Purify oneself, body and soul.

Stay away from the ugliness that tempts you.

Remember your God, be peaceful and harmonious.

The lyrics have the potential to differ between regions, but the meanings conveyed are similar. This poem contains implicit gender meaning, namely from the choice of the word "konco" which means both male and female people (Interviewee S, 2024). The poem has the meaning of an invitation for all people, both men and women, to achieve independence by building the country (Indonesia) together. This meaning is continued with the diction "*sing sayup rukun*" which has a message for humans, both men and women, to live in peace and harmony without causing conflict. The existence of a gender perspective in several aspects certainly aims to create a peaceful and inclusive society with gender issues (UN Women Meksiko, 2023). Therefore, gender insights contained in Reog Cemandi are indicated to promote awareness of substantive equality between women and men as a basic foundation for the prevention of femicide.

Women's Empowerment in Reog Cemandi Dance and the Potential for Femicide

Efforts to empower women through Reog Cemandi begin with the meaning of clothing that is closely related to the position of women in society. The fashion of *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon* dancers has a difference. *Banongan lanang* wears clothes with a black

base color while *banongan wadon* wears red base color clothes. The meaning of the black color in the *banongan lanang* outfit is in accordance with the meaning according to Javanese culture, which symbolizes wisdom in leading (Syarif, 2018). The context of leading in Reog Cemandi does not mean commanding but accompanying. The black clothes are decorated with yellow, white, red, and black thread tassels. The colorful tassels have the philosophy of "Papat Kiblat Lima Pancer". The philosophy is interpreted as human friends who accompany from birth to the end of life (Sulistiyati, 2009). *Sedulur Papat* itself is *Kakang Kawah, Adhi Ari Ari, Getih and Pusar*.

This philosophy means that humans need friends as behavior control for a calm and prosperous life as well as a reminder of the Creator as the owner of all nature (Hanifah, 2020). If correlated in the context of gender, men and women can become friends to control behavior in the world. If behavioral control can be carried out in balance between men and women, then life in the world can be peaceful and prosperous. On the other hand, in the *banongan wadon* dress code, the clothes used are red with yellow and green thread tassels. The red color based on the nature believed in Javanese culture means dexterity and skill. The green and yellow thread tassel means the struggle to face various situations. In addition to the top clothes, *banongan wadon* also wears a long cloth or *jarik* which is used for the lower part of the dancer in the form of a cloth with a revelation *tumurun* motif.

The reason female dancers wear revelation motif batik is because it has a meaning of glory. It is undeniable that in this life we must glorify women, of course, if within the scope of the family they are very meritorious in maintaining and caring for their offspring sincerely. Therefore, the selection of the revelation *tumurun* motif is expected to be an implicit medium to always glorify women in the surrounding community and the next generation. (Interview head of Reog Cemandi, 13 April 2024).

According to Kusrianto (2013), it is stated that the *Wahyu Tumurun* batik motif pattern has a certain meaning and philosophy. Motifs with floating crown patterns have a meaning of glory. Batik patterns are generally inspired by cultural elements and philosophies of life (Triandika, 2024). As batik is a national icon of Indonesia, its place, meaning, content and development are linked to the narrative of the development of Indonesian society (Febriani et al., 2023).



Picture 5. Dancers Clothing of Reog Cemandi

The [picture 5](#) shown by this motif is that someone who wears this motif gets guidance, grace, and abundant blessings from the Creator in reaching positions, ranks, and ideals. In the context of male and (Syarif, 2018) female relationships, this motif symbolizes inner and outer life, harmony, happiness, and loyalty in the household. Therefore, this motif is often used in wedding ceremonies (Sari, 2019). If the meaning of fashion in *Reog Cemandi* is correlated, the meaning to be conveyed is that men have a role to accompany women in living life with good behavior in order to create peace and prosperity. In addition, women are believed to be a figure full of glory.

Reog Cemandi Dancer's Clothing Female dancers wash the dance clothes that have been used assisted by male dancers. (Observation in Cemandi Village, 13 April 2024).

In the implementation of the meaning of Reog Cemandi dance fashion, the community can understand and apply this value well. This art can create a very close relationship between dance tradition and society. According to Herusatoto, (2008) dance is used to create symbols used by humans to communicate with other humans so that it has a concrete form with meaning understood by humans themselves. *Reog Cemandi* art is one of the dances that is a medium for symbolic communication between humans and other humans, with the aim of communicating with ancestral spirits and the God. Communication between

humans and other humans has a massive gender meaning and is intertwined with society.

Picture 6. The Cohesiveness of Relations Between Women and Men in Reog Cemandi

The [picture 6](#) shown that men and women can share



the roles and support each other. Men have an awareness that there should be a good division of roles between genders that can create a harmonious social atmosphere. This awareness to honor or empower women can then be a good first step to avoid femicide or gender-based violence ([Hiong, 2024](#)). This awareness to respect each other is contained in a culture and manifested in people's lives since long ago. If this pattern is strongly constructed, femicide can be reduced or even stopped through art and culture. These aspects are contained in all art tools such as clothing, poetry, movements, and offerings used. Moreover, the gender meaning is in accordance with the indicators of femicide prevention.

Implementation of Femicide Prevention through Reog Cemandi Dance

In the midst of femicide that erodes the sense of security and justice for women, Reog Cemandi Sidoarjo Dance has the potential to become a medium that displays its alignment with women with gender meaning. This traditional dance, with its distinctiveness and values, contains three main indicators in an effort to prevent femicide, namely gender insight and awareness, gender cooperation, and women's empowerment. The meanings and values contained in Reog Cemandi will be more effective if constructed in concrete implementation. The following are ideas that can be implemented through the medium of Reog Cemandi Dance:

Fostering Education-based Gender Insight and Awareness

The figure of *banongan lanang* and *banongan wadon*, a couple who respect each other and walk hand in hand in *Reog Cemandi* Dance, is a symbol of gender equality. This can help improve people's understanding of the role of women who are equal to men. The moral message about gender equality in this dance, namely women and men working together to achieve common goals, can encourage the creation of a culture of mutual respect and tolerance, and minimize the potential for violence against women. *Reog Cemandi* Dance can be an educational medium to raise public awareness about the issue of femicide and the importance of protecting women. Femicide can be prevented or stopped optimally if there are preventive actions that can be entered through the world of education ([Hiong, 2024](#)). This dance performance can be held in various places, such as schools, communities, and other public events, to reach a wide audience and open space for discussion and dialogue on issues related to gender and humanity. As local art and culture, *Reog Cemandi* Dance can be transformed into learning in the form of handout development ([Fakhiroh et al., 2020](#)). In addition, one strategy for implementation through education is to involve the younger generation through training and workshops. By teaching the dance, music and philosophy behind *Reog Cemandi*, they can understand and appreciate this cultural heritage. In addition, collaboration with local schools and communities can also increase children's interest in participating.

Fostering Education-based Gender Insight and Awareness

Efforts to prevent femicide through Reog Cemandi Dance in Sidoarjo require the active involvement of various parties, including artists, cultural figures, women's activists, local government and communities. This collaboration is essential to strengthen the message and impact of prevention efforts. Involving women in the creative process of Reog Cemandi Dance, such as dancers, choreographers or costume makers, can strengthen the goal of empowering women ([Rudianti et al., 2024](#)). It can increase self-confidence and encourage women's active participation in various fields. In addition, dialogue and discussion between genders on the issue of femicide and the role of Reog Cemandi Dance in its prevention can help build a common understanding and commitment to realize gender equality and protect women. A women-only community can be formed within Reog Cemandi's membership.

Encouraging Economic-based Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment is key to combating femicide ([UN Women Meksiko, 2023](#)). Providing training and capacity building for Sidoarjo women, such as involvement in dance, can help them become agents of change in the fight against femicide. Increasing women's economic access through arts-related economic empowerment programs, such as entrepreneurship training to distribute dance accessories, miniature masks and miniature drums, can help them achieve financial independence and minimize various forms of violence such as psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, economic violence and other forms of violence that can harm or cause injury to women ([Zulfikar, 2022](#)). Reog Cemandi dance can also build a network of support for Sidoarjo women. This can be done through the formation of a women's dance community or group as a place for them to strengthen each other, share experiences and get help when experiencing violence.

CONCLUSION

The gender insight aspect is contained in the art properties of Reog Cemandi, namely the banongan lanang and banongan wadon masks, which mean that men and women must unite to fight evil. Aspects of gender equality are found in offerings and dance movements, namely that men and women have a joint role to create harmony. The aspect of women's empowerment can be seen from the meaning of the offerings that require humans to glorify women. A number of these aspects are indicators of the prevention of femicide as cases of gender crimes are increasing. The next step is to implement the meanings in Reog Cemandi based on indicators of femicide prevention through various fields, so that it is hoped that this dance can be the first step in creating an atmosphere of resistance to femicide through art.

Regarding the research on Reog Cemandi Dance and its potential as a prevention of femicide, the researcher expects more rich related research. Femicide as the killing of women should not be rampant in Indonesia. To prevent femicide, researchers hope for education and concrete programs such as the declaration in student textbooks. These efforts can be started by instilling gender insights in oneself and realizing the urgency of preventing femicide through local culture. The shortcoming of this research is that there are no specific statistics that prove that this art is accurate in

preventing femicide directly, because it is still in the stage of interpreting art, so this can be a recommendation for further research.

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